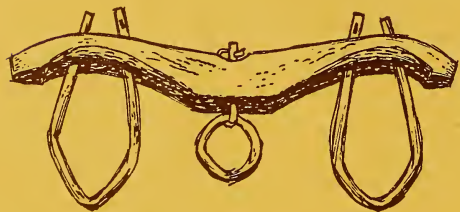


973.7L63
GH44a2

Hertz, Emanuel
Abraham Lincoln's loyalty
to his friends

LINCOLN ROOM
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY



MEMORIAL
the Class of 1901

founded by
HARLAN HOYT HORNER
and
HENRIETTA CALHOUN HORNER

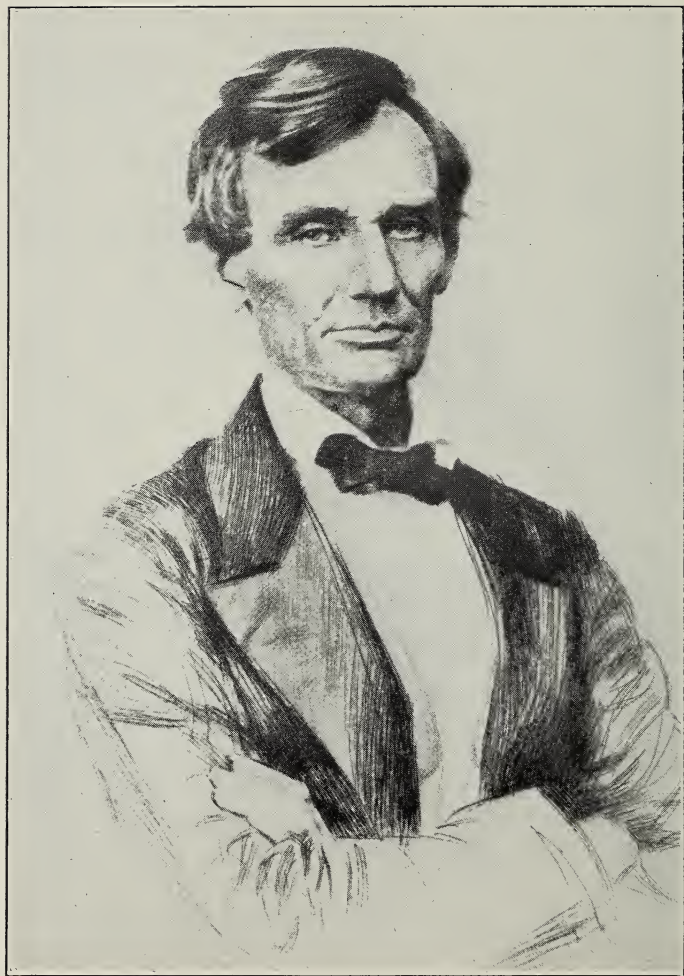
*Abraham Lincoln's
Loyalty to His
Friends*

By
EMANUEL HERTZ

*Delivered at the Twenty-third Annual Banquet of the Wayne
County Pennsylvania Society of New York City
at Hotel McAlpin, Feb. 2, 1929*



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S LOYALTY TO HIS FRIENDS

By
EMANUEL HERTZ

(Delivered at the Twenty-third Annual Banquet of the Wayne County Pennsylvania Society of New York City at Hotel McAlpin, Feb. 2, 1929.)

THE foundations of a fame which has lasted to this day, and which is likely to last through the ages, had a great many elemental causes upon which they were based in this extraordinary life. Biographers and eulogists, contemporary statesmen and political leaders are, however, agreed upon one point, although they seem to differ about a great many others in his life. They all agree that in Lincoln is to be found a profound loyalty and attachment to his friends, to his neighbors, to his fellow-practitioners and to his political associates such as is rarely to be found in the case of a man belonging to that class of the limited few—situated such as he was.

We find, as a rule, that the history of a career of one such as his, is strewn with the wrecks of other careers in order that the principal actor who climbed to prominence through the efforts of his friends, may have a free path. It is an old familiar story that most men, as a rule, climb to fame and political fortune and preferment at the expense of their friends. George Harvey and James Smith of New Jersey were responsible for the appearance of Woodrow Wilson in politics. They made his nomination and election to the governorship possible. Without their aid and work he would have never emerged

from Princeton—and yet he completely demolished these two men—one immediately after he was inaugurated Governor and the other was driven from his party—and Wilson gloated over it and welcomed congratulatory missives on the “splendid” performance. Few among our men are to be found who worked with others for the common good and came out with friendships unimpaired.

Again, we need but point to Roosevelt and to Wilson, the former who alienated many, the latter practically all who brought him into prominence;—witness the impalement of Lansing, the dismissal of Bryan and House, and a great many others who worked with him during his term of office.

At the end of Lincoln’s term there was not one man—with the possible exception of Valladingham—not even Chase—and he belonged and remained permanently in the opposition—who was not, so to say, overwhelmed with Lincoln’s kindness, with Lincoln’s fairness. Here was Chase, first a potential and then a disappointed candidate for the presidency in 1860, as well as in 1864, frequently very unkind to his chief—never disloyal as some claim. Chase was too formidable a champion of the Union to be disloyal to Lincoln, who waged the battles of the Union; but he certainly was not slow to emphasize his misfortune and bewail his lot in being neglected by an ungrateful party when they came to pick a leader for the great emergency. He was more than reconciled—he was overwhelmed by the kindly treatment of Lincoln which culminated in his designation as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in spite of the powerful opposition expressed by letter and in person by his many opponents. Lincoln did not flinch—he recognized that as Governor of Ohio and as Senator he had fairly earned the gratitude of the party and of the country. Hence, Lincoln overlooked Chase’s shortcomings in point of character and his many irritating demonstrations and actions during his association with his chief in the Cabinet. Chase’s

case was extreme as was Stanton's. He cared little or nothing about Stanton's boorishness, about his savage comments about himself and his policy before he came into close contact with him; he had completely forgotten the almost savage treatment he received a few years ago at the hands of Stanton in the Cincinnati Reaper patent case. He had similar experiences with the vain, but highly gifted Senator from Massachusetts, Charles Sumner, the representative of the élite of Massachusetts—a man always concerned with the traditions of the Senate—and whether he was properly filling the roll of Daniel Webster; he was not an easy man to get along with. The Senatorial clique of extremely able men made up of Henry Winter Davis, Benjamin Wade and Lyman Trumbull—were not the class of men any more than Sumner—who showed any disposition to be led by Lincoln—each one at first was convinced that he could do infinitely better than Lincoln were he in Lincoln's place, and still each one of these was being gradually convinced of Lincoln's great leadership, of Lincoln's towering ability, of Lincoln's great accomplishments. The governors of states loyal to the Union, too, were a class of men—extraordinary as governors go, every-one of them capable, earnest, sincere and tremendously able,—each a peculiar personality.

Beginning with Andrew of Massachusetts—a governor of that great militant commonwealth, every inch of him—a trifle too sure of himself and a bit impatient at first with Lincoln, more than overmatched by Stanton, Lincoln's able deputy; Buckingham and McClean of Connecticut, Curtin of Pennsylvania, Todd and Dennison of Ohio, Oliver P. Morton of Indiana, Yates of Illinois, Johnson of Tennessee, Kirkwood of Iowa and the rest, especially Seymour of New York, the mephistophelian figure of the Civil War—brilliant and gifted, learned, scholarly, but ambitious at a time when patriotism should have dominated all men in office—all these came in

contact with Lincoln, and all were gradually attracted and swayed by Lincoln. Each one made requests and demands upon Lincoln, and all had plans and policies which they urged upon Lincoln. All of them could not be granted; some were. Each one of them made recommendations to, and demands upon Lincoln, that their advice, that their plan be followed.

Unfortunately, the correspondence with these men, especially Lincoln's letters to them, which would throw a great deal of light on this complicated phase of Lincoln's domestic diplomacy and statesmanship, is incomplete. A great many have hidden their discomfiture by suppressing the letters Lincoln wrote in reply to their unreasonable demands and to their inept and impractical advice of how they would save or sever the Union.

His relations with Governor Newell of New Jersey have just come to light in letters hitherto unpublished and which accidentally have been preserved. The Governor was unquestionably one of Lincoln's friends, loyal to the core, frequently invited to the White House by Mrs. Lincoln, as a number of her unpublished letters testify. Colonel Hatfield, one of Newell's friends, desired promotion in the army. He enlisted Governor Newell's undivided support, exacted a promise that Governor Newell would neither support nor recommend anyone for any position which would, in any degree, interfere with Hatfield's chances. Subsequently, and while this application was pending, Governor Newell was compelled to recommend another friend, Colonel Allen, for a minor position; and as might be expected, Lincoln saw his way to granting the minor job at Governor Newell's request, but could not appoint the former to the Brigadier-Generalship, which he wanted. When it became known that the minor appointment was made, Colonel Hatfield promptly charged Governor Newell with double dealing and unfairness. The Governor, for some reason, had to take notice of the charge and was forced to refute

the charge. Lincoln was the only one who could help him out of his predicament and Governor Newell did not hesitate to appeal to Lincoln to clear him, and enable him to refute the baseless charge. To our generation—looking in retrospect at the much-occupied and overworked chief magistrate, it seems almost inconceivable that he found time to enter into such minor issues, such local misunderstandings, while the very existence of the country was at stake. And still he seems to have had time for all things—especially to help a friend, to remove a mistaken belief, to rectify a wrong impression, to clear a name and destroy baseless enmity. And so I invite your attention to the two letters—Newell to the President and the President to Newell:

“Executive Mansion,
Washington, 18 Feby. 1862.

To His Excellency,
President Lincoln.
Sir:

Col. Hatfield is impressed with the belief that I have not faithfully urged his appointment to a Brigadiership with your Excellency chiefly on account of the few words I said to you in relation to Col. Allen. You will remember that upon the eve of the departure of the Burnside Expedition I said to you that Col. Allen would like to be made a Brigadier over the Regiment which he had commanded as acting Brigadier. At the same time I stated that I did not desire that he should by any means interfere with my application previously made for Hatfield and that Allen should only be advanced if two were given to us, and that I desired Hatfield to be understood to be my choice over all others.

“Your excellency knows how faithfully, zealously, and importunately I have urged Hatfield’s appointment and

I beg you to write on this note that I have acted in good faith with him, and urged his success to the best of my ability.

"I have the honor to be very respectfully,

WM. A. NEWELL."

"Executive Mansion,
Feb. 18, 1862.

Hon. W. A. Newell,

My dear Sir:

Your note on the other half of this sheet is exactly true so far as is within my power to know. Your advocacy of Col. Hatfield for a Brigadier-General has been earnest, without reservation, oft repeated, and persistent, so that I can and do know it was not in your power to do more for Col. Hatfield with me than you have done—

You never urged Col. Allen, except with the express reservation that his appointment should in no wise interfere with Col. Hatfield.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN."

And all this in the beginning of the year 1862, when the most epoch-making events were engaging Lincoln's attention, when the outlook was so dark that no one thought that Lincoln could hold out—not to say re-elected—when men, hundreds of thousands of men, had to be raised by draft, when riots were the order of the day in New York and in St. Louis, when armies had to be clad and fed and munitioned, when intervention was in the air, when Congress was investigating

the conduct of the war, when our armies had been uniformly beaten, when a hostile opposition was girding its loins to destroy the party in power and Lincoln with it. It was just this Lincoln did throughout his stay in the White House—down to the second candidacy in 1864. When even supermen like Francis Lieber urged Lincoln to resign and make way for Grant or some other new man. When Lincoln, himself, wrote a memorandum and sealed it and preserved it—showing that even he began to doubt the faith of the people in him—this is what he wrote:

“August 23, 1864—Memorandum.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,

August 23, 1864.

This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to so cooperate with the President-elect as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration; as he will have secured his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterward.

A. LINCOLN.”

I cannot refrain from referring to Lincoln's treatment of the delegate from Kansas, Mark W. Delahay, who asked Lincoln to send him two hundred dollars to come to Chicago and vote for him—but it illustrates Lincoln's gratitude and loyalty better than any other incident—and his determination to accomplish what he considered of importance by means which he considered proper. There was no can't about him. A similar act in our own day defeated an aspirant for a Presidential nomination. Here is the correspondence; the name of the delegate had for a long time been withheld from the

head of the letter—and appears without the name in all the Lincoln works publications:

“As to your kind wishes for myself, allow me to say I can not enter the ring on the money basis—first, because in the main, it is wrong; and secondly, I have not, and can not get, the money—I say, in the main, the use of money is wrong; but for certain objects, in a political contest, the use of some, is both right, and indispensable. With me, as with yourself, the long struggle has been one of great pecuniary loss. I now distinctly say this—If you shall be appointed a delegate to Chicago, I will furnish one hundred dollars to bear the expences of the trip—

Your friend, as ever

A. LINCOLN.”

Lincoln kept his promise, paid the expenses, and what is more he did so although the candidate failed of election and the Kansas delegation which was elected was instructed for Seward. Another man in Lincoln's place would have dropped the unsuccessful candidate for delegate, for by the law of politics, he who fails is not to be considered—“successful politicians have no conscience,” they say—but see what Lincoln does:

“Springfield, Ill.,

April 14, 1860

My dear Sir:

Reaching home last night I find your letter of the 7th—You know I was in New England—Some of the acquaintances I made while there, wrote me since the election that the close vote in Conn. & and the quasi defeat in R. I. are a drawback upon the prospects of Gov. Seward; and Trumbull writes Dubois to the same effect—Do not

mention this as coming from me—Both those states are safe enough for us in the fall—I see by the despatches that since you wrote Kansas has appointed Delegates and instructed them for Seward—Don't stir them up to anger, but come along to the convention, & I will do as I said about expenses.

Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN."

There is some doubt as to whether Delahay ever actually accepted Lincoln's generous offer, but it is a fact that within ten days after Lincoln's inauguration he appointed him to a Federal office with a comfortable salary and even asked for his preferences as to other appointments in Kansas. Lincoln writes: "When I saw you a moment this morning I forgot to ask you about some of the Kansas appointments, which I intended to do. If you care much about them you can write, as I think I shall not make the appointments just yet." It mattered little that this man had asked for something that roused a protest in Lincoln's mind as to the propriety of the act—it mattered little—but the fact that he made an effort to help Lincoln when Lincoln needed help—that was the test, and Lincoln lived up to his noble ideal of rewarding one who aided him. It was but the sequel—one of many—of defending Cartwright free of charge because his mother, Hannah, aided him, befriended him when he needed aid, when he needed friends.

Among Lincoln's daily tasks of State were errands of mercy, help to those who were his friends, besides the thousand and one things that reached him from the daily visitors who ever were in Washington on their way to the man who was alone in the White House. He evidently had time for all these things in addition to the working out in his own mind at first, and then with his Cabinet and Congressional and Sena-

torial Committees—the most important problems in our history which had to do with the salvaging of the Union, and with repairing and rebuilding it upon foundations of law, of order, of justice, and of good will to all men. The problem at this distance seems extremely simple. Some even claim that it would have solved itself. So thought those who laughed at Columbus with the flattened end of the egg, and at Alexander who cut the Gordian Knot—while others had talked of the impossibility of unravelling the puzzles. But as time recedes, we all begin to see the greatness of the task—and the greatness of him who successfully coped with it and accomplished it. He could not have done all this alone. He needed an instrument. His Party—the new Republican Party—was at first the doubting, if not unwilling, instrument which he gradually transformed by just such methods as he used with Newell and with Stanton and with Seward and with Chase, into an enthusiastic host which worked with Lincoln. How could anyone refuse Lincoln anything? How could anyone hesitate to comply with his every request? We are told that men in regiments and divisions in battle march willingly, actuated by the universal appeal—by the team work of the multitude. It was in that manner that Father Abraham, by his kindness, by his generosity, by his nobility of character, created a unison, a team work among all leaders in the different parts of the Union—which in due time brought him to a position of power, when he could and did command a united North against a disrupted and quarreling leadership in the South; Grant and Sherman and Sheridan and Thomas and Farragut and Porter, great as they were, different in character as they were—volumes have been written and will be written about each one of them—worked in harmony under the spell of Lincoln.

Andrew and Curtin and Morton and Dix and Todd and Yates—with different ambitions and different backgrounds—

different in environment, education and ambitions—as they were—ultimately worked in unison, practically wiping out Party lines, and brought their commonwealths under the spell of Abraham Lincoln.

Sumner and Wade and Henry Winter Davis and Tad Stephens and Fessenden and Zachariah Chandler and Trumbull and Douglas—volumes could be written and have been—about their idiosyncrasies, their different ambitions, their clashing theories, their foibles, their vanities and above all their great ability and strength of character—different as they were ultimately worked in unison under the spell of Abraham Lincoln—each assigned to his appointed task—beginning with Sumner, who saw in him St. Louis doing justice under a tree, to the brilliant Douglas, whom he convinced and converted.

Greeley, Bennett, Medill, Weed, Childs—who at first coped with each other in their powerful journals in order first to belittle and discredit and then to advise Lincoln as to his proper course—the newspapermen in all ages have a wide outlook and wield great power for good or for evil—the power of the press in those days was simply tremendous—but ultimately they worked in unison with Abraham Lincoln—and wrote and advised their millions of readers as Lincoln directed.

Beecher, Parker, Channing, Storrs and a great many preachers—and how many of them ever agree—who at first had lost faith in Lincoln—was he not too slow? was he not too cowardly? was he not controlled by corrupt politicians? queried the religious leaders—but ultimately began to see and understand, and worked with Lincoln.

Wendell Phillips, Garrison, Lovejoy and the whole Abolitionist phalanx, as ideal and impractical and impatient a phalanx of reformers as ever gathered under one mutinous flag—who mercilessly condemned, reviled and literally cursed

Lincoln—"The slave hound of Illinois"—ultimately began to perceive that there was a Deity that guided Lincoln—did penance and henceforth became silenced and thereafter worked with Lincoln.

The poets, Whittier and Stedman and Longfellow and Whittman, and the whole choir of poetical nightingales, who in a middle key cavilled at and irritated Lincoln and thought that they influenced Lincoln with their limpid verse—ultimately, but alas too late, changed poems of carping and criticism into poems of sadness, of tears and paens of praise and glory to the dead conqueror.

His own neighbors in Springfield, with whom he had lived and grown into middle age, for twenty-five years, who at first doubted and questioned the reality of what they read and heard—their neighbor Lincoln a great statesman, the poor lawyer a great diplomat—the spinner of yarns, of jokes—a great military leader, the poverty-stricken surveyor the head of a great nation—the poor fellow who fled from the outbursts of his wife—the fearless captain of a gigantic convulsion—it can't be, it is simply impossible—not until his remains reached Springfield did everyone reach back and search the memory for thirty years to find that he was one of the fortunate mortals who had worked with Lincoln. For having worked with Lincoln became a badge of distinction as high an honor as belonging to the Order of the Cincinnati in Washington's day, as high a privilege as being a member of Cromwell's "Ironsides", as glorious an association as membership of those noble three hundred who gave their all for love of country, thousands of years ago in far off Thermopilae.







3 0112 031819276